

Agricultural Marketing Service  
Deputy Administrator, Marketing Programs  
Tobacco Programs  
Raleigh, NC, or Lexington, KY, Regional Office  
Agricultural Commodity Grader (Tobacco)  
GS-1980-07

SJ TB5

## Introduction

The Division must provide a group of graders (referred to as "sets") for each official auction sale conducted during the tobacco marketing season. These sets are grouped geographically for Administrative and program control purposes into "circuits." Both the circuits and their sets are designed to provide tobacco grading service during a marketing season which begins in the southern flue-cured belts and progresses northward, ending in the burley region. During this northward movement, circuits are structured to reflect historic zones of tobacco marketing. These zones do not usually market simultaneously, but sequentially.

The employee functions as a member of a set of graders who provide grading services at an auction market sale. The set travels to various locations as the market "moves" with the season. During the course of the marketing season, the employee grades two or more classes of tobacco involving several types.

## Duties

The incumbent is responsible for certifying the official grade of tobacco by recording its type, grade, and condition upon an official certificate. Selects, draws samples, inspects, and grades one or more types of tobacco of various grades and qualities in accordance with official standards and regulations. Utilizes an intimate knowledge of the characteristics of tobacco of one or more closely related types; methods used in cultivating, harvesting, and curing tobacco; and the suitability of tobacco for various uses as these factors relate to the application of the official standards. Makes grade determinations, but refers to a higher grade inspector tobacco which has unusual characteristics for the type, or where a borderline decision is required in cases in which the grade has been questioned. Determinations made are always subject to review and change by a higher grade inspector as review indicates changes are necessary. On the auction floor, assists the market news work by distributing market reports, reporting on marketing or market conditions, advising farmers of market trends, and providing information on sales schedules. Also performs other duties as assigned.

### 1. Knowledge Required by the Position

Knowledge of the characteristics pertinent to most of the tobacco types (2 or more classes each including a variety of types), which are relevant to grade determination, such as characteristics of

various leaf types, typical color shadings, and common types of damage. To a lesser extent, knowledge of harvesting, curing, and marketing practices.

Knowledge of the official standards and rules also pertinent to an extensive range of tobacco types.

Skill in sampling and grading the product.

## 2. Supervisory Controls

The work leader coordinates the grading at the auction site and provides the immediate assignment.

The employee independently samples, grades, and certifies the product making nearly all determinations, including some borderline cases. In difficult instances, the work leader or senior employee is referred to for decision.

The work leader or a higher grade inspector frequently reviews the incumbent's work to insure uniformity in the application of official standards.

## 3. Guidelines

Guides consist of the official standards and rules, written instructions and definitions covering grading procedures, and incidental administrative instructions.

The primary guidelines, particularly the grade standards and rules, are applied by the employee to an extensive range (2 or more classes, each including a variety of types) of tobacco types. The employee must use judgment, especially in making borderline grading determinations but also in making numerous and rapid grading decisions during the normal auctioning process. The rapidity of the grading makes it impractical to refer to the written standards for specific guidance.

## 4. Complexity

The work consists primarily in applying related grading techniques and methods of the same general nature of various types of tobacco. Duties require little consideration of storage, transit, or processing techniques associated with the product.

## 5. Scope and Effect

The work involves making final grade determinations on individual lots of tobacco. The product's grade directly affects the price the lot will bring at auction and affects the financial position of the producers, warehousemen, and buyers.

## 6. Personal Contacts

Contacts include growers, warehousemen, and their employees, other graders and office personnel and, to a lesser extent, buyers.

#### 7. Purpose of Contacts

The purpose is to develop and maintain cooperation of industry personnel to promote and explain the grading program and standards; to explain and defend grade determinations to tobacco growers or other financially interested persons; and to arrange for timely grading work.

#### 8. Physical Demands

Grading at auction requires constant bending, stooping, crouching, and standing as well as exertion of pulling samples from lots weighing several hundred pounds.

#### 9. Work Environment

The work environment involves working in temperatures ranging from over 100 degrees to below zero and exposure to tobacco-dusted air.